

Approved For Release 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-06456R0002700020000-0 REPORT NO

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Lebanon/Syria ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SUBJECT Discussions in the Lebanese-Syrian
Communist Party
25X1A6a

DATE DISTR. 28 Apr 1949

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1A2g

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)
25X1A2g

DATE OF INFO. January-March 1949 and as stated

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X6

1. Source asserts that the Command of the Communist Party in Lebanon has been rent by discord, for which Ra'if Khuri is mainly responsible, as Khuri hopes, by encouraging opposition to Khalid Baghdash, eventually to replace him as the leading Communist of the Levant States, and perhaps of the Arab world. From his vantage point as Soviet Legation liaison officer, outside the Central Committee of either Party, Khuri is in a position to stir up trouble without being involved directly himself, and to watch the Communist leaders undermine each other, while awaiting his moment. The Soviets, however, are not unaware of this and have tried to put a stop to it, source asserts.
2. On 30 March source reported that the Soviet Legation had intervened, and had obtained the cancellation of the decision suspending Artin Madoyan from the Communist Party. Baghdash, however, found a way to keep Madoyan out of the Communist Command by delegating him to supervise the Party's activities in Aleppo, Syria. Madoyan submitted to this decision, although unwillingly, and is now in Aleppo, source states.
3. On 30 March source also reported that Fu'ad Qazan, as well, was in trouble. Fired with enthusiasm after his victorious return from service with the partisans in France, Qazan had tried to have the Lebanese Communist Party remodelled on the French pattern. This plan, however, was rejected on the grounds that the situation in Lebanon, where the Party is comparatively weak, was very different from that in France, where it enjoys mass support. Qazan, according to source, lacking the courage to insist on his point of view, pretended to be convinced by this argument. However, when the Party again had to go underground after the measures taken against it in May 1948, Qazan tried to reintroduce his plan for remodelling the Party along French lines. Baghdash and Shawi, however, still felt that the time was not ripe for this and, when Qazan kept insisting, he was ordered to the Biza' to assist Tammus Diyeh and Wadi' Nassrallah in Party organization.

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Document No.

NO CHANGE in Class.

☐ DECLASSIFIED

Class. CHANGED TO: TS

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

DDA REG. 77/1763

Approved For Release 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-00457R002700020000

Date: 15 MAY 1978

by:

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4. Source states that, recently, the Communist leaders have returned to their home districts; Khalid Baghdash went to Damascus, Farajallah Hilu to Jubayl, and Nicola Shawi to Tripoli.*
 5. Source also reported that two more Communists were in difficulties with the Command. One was Maurice Kamil, recruited some years ago by Antun Tabit and a member of the Party's "intellectual section," as well as of the Party's section in the 'Akkawi Quarter of Beirut, along Tariq al-Nahr (the river road). Kamil, who was editor-in-chief of the Party magazine, al-Tariq, on 24 March remarked to one of the comrades of his section that Nicola Shawi had replaced Farajallah Hilu in the Command, because Hilu, unlike Shawi, was "unwilling to join Baghdash in his pastimes, especially with women." The same day, this remark was reported to the Command and, on the day following, Shawi delegated Hasan Quraytim to tell Kamil that he was dismissed from al-Tariq, and from the Party, as well. Upon being given this message, Kamil admitted to the conversation, but pleaded that it was the result of a long drinking bout, in the course of which he "lost consciousness."
 6. At a meeting of Communist Party leaders in Tartus, Syria, some three months ago, differences arose on the Palestine question. According to source, Rashad 'Isa, with the support of Hashim Amin, opposed recognition of Israel by the Party, on the grounds that this move would make the Party unpopular with the masses. Khalid Baghdash, however, said that Israel must be accepted, as its existence would obstruct American activities in the Arab world, and he said that the Communist Party expected to enjoy considerable power and influence in the new state. Although Baghdash's opinion was accepted by the majority of those present, Amin and 'Isa persisted in their views and, finally, a committee was appointed to study the matter, consisting of Antun Tabit, Ra'if Khuri, Dr. Jundi, and Dr. Samih 'Alam-al-Din. Source states that the committee evidently decided in favor of Baghdash, and the result was that Rashad 'Isa, who persisted in his attitude, was suspended from the Party.** Source adds that the Communist Party's shift from support of a unified state in Palestine to support of partition has cost it a number of resignations, especially on the part of Moslems.
 7. Source states that Mustafa 'Aris, too, got into trouble for making the speech in Tripoli which recently led to his arrest and imprisonment with a number of his comrades. 'Aris was reprimanded for breaking Communist Party regulations by making a speech of this nature without previously consulting the Command.
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- * [REDACTED] Comment. This move may have been made in order to strengthen the local Communist cadres, in case a revolutionary situation developed as a result of the Syrian crisis.
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- ** [REDACTED] Comment. Source of paragraph one confirmed that Rashad 'Isa had been expelled from the Communist Party. It is the opinion of this source, however, that the expulsion of 'Isa represents a victory for the anti-Baghdash forces, as source asserts that 'Isa is closely associated with Baghdash, and makes no reference to differences between the two at this meeting which allegedly took place at Tartus.

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